

# Heavenly, Sugar Pine Foundation team up to plant 1,000 seedlings

Armed with gloves, shovels, sugar pine seedlings and the knowledge of proper planting techniques, volunteers planted 1,000 seedlings across 10 acres on Oct. 1 at Van Sickle Bi-state Park.

For more than three hours 114 Heavenly Mountain Resort volunteers gathered at the Stateline area park to help restore the Gondola Fire scar area as part of Vail Resorts Echo Day.

“I am proud of the Heavenly staff for their continued dedication to preserving the local environment and their willingness to give back to their local community on Echo Day and throughout the year,” Pete Sonntag, vice president and general manager of Heavenly Mountain Resort, said in a statement. “We all love and appreciate the Lake Tahoe Basin and want it to be as beautiful 100 years from now as it is today. We certainly hope to see these newly planted sugar pine seedlings thriving 100 years from now.”

The Sugar Pine Foundation is dedicated to saving Tahoe’s sugar pine trees. Since 2008, the foundation has planted more than 500 acres with more than 30,000 sugar pines and other native trees to maintain Tahoe’s legacy of beautiful, healthy forests.

“We are excited to partner with Heavenly and grateful for their efforts to restore some of the fire scar in the area,” Maria Mircheva, Sugar Pine Foundation’s executive director, said in press release. “Through the support of Vail Resorts Echo, we are able to kick off a series of tree planting days that will improve forest health in the area.”

In total, the Sugar Pine Foundation plans to plant 10,000 seedlings this fall.

The seedlings planted Saturday, supplied by the Sugar Pine Foundation, are resistant to the invasive fungal pathogen blister rust. By planting seedlings that are resistant to the fungus, Heavenly is helping to restore the Sugar Pine species in the Lake Tahoe Basin and work toward eradicating the devastating pathogen.